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Israel is paying influencers $7,000 per post

Netanyahu referred this week to a 'community' pushing out preferred messaging in US media — and boy are they making a princely sum

REPORTING | QIOSK

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NICK CLEVELAND-STOUT
SEP 30, 2025

In a meeting dedicated to harnessing pro-Israel media energy on Friday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu alluded to a cohort of Israel's influencers. "We have to fight back. How do we fight back? Our influencers. I think you should also talk to them if you have a chance, to that community, they are very important."

Being paid by Israel to post on social media is also very lucrative. According to previously unreported recent documents, these influencers are likely being paid around $7,000 per post on social media such as Tik Tok and Instagram on behalf of Israel.

Bridges Partners, a firm working for the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sent a series of invoices for its "Influencer Campaign" to Havas Media Group Germany, an international media group working for Israel. The invoices detailed a sum of $900,000, starting in June and slated to end in November, for a cohort of 14-18 influencers to create content.

The document, which was filed under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, notes that the funding is for both “payments for influencers and production,” but does not provide a breakdown between the two. When taking into account the administrative production costs through Sept. 16 — legal fees, banking fees, marketing fees, and other project services noted in a separate document — that leaves an estimated sum of $552,946 for the influencers between June and September of this year.

The firm estimated that the cohort was expected to produce 75-90 posts in that time. Doing the math, that would be $6,143 per post on the low end. On the high end, each influencer could be making as much as $7,372 per post.

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It is not clear which influencers are participating in the program. Havas, the firm overseeing Bridges Partners’ work, did not respond to multiple requests for comment about the project, which influencers are participating in the program, or how much each is paid.

Bridges Partners' founders are Yair Levi and Uri Steinberg, who each own a 50% stake in the firm. Bridges Partners describes its work as assisting with "promoting cultural interchange between United States and Israel."

The firm, which lists its business address in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Washington D.C., has also enlisted the help of a former major in the IDF spokesperson unit, Nadav Shtrauchler. For legal counsel, Levi and Steinberg have turned to Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman, a firm that previously worked for controversial Israeli spyware company NSO Group.

The Bridges Partners campaign is titled "Esther Project," a name which bears resemblance to the Heritage Foundation's "Project Esther," a campaign to fight anti-semitism by branding critics of Israel as part of a terrorist support network. A Heritage spokesperson informed Responsible Statecraft that "there is no connection between The Heritage Foundation's Project Esther announced October 2024 and Bridge Partner's Esther Project."

Nick Cleveland-Stout

Nick Cleveland-Stout is a Research Associate in the Democratizing Foreign Policy program at the Quincy Institute. Previously, Nick conducted research on U.S.-Brazil relations as a 2023 Fulbright fellow at the Federal University of Santa Catarina.

The views expressed by authors on Responsible Statecraft do not necessarily reflect those of the Quincy Institute or its associates.
Top photo credit: X/Debra Lea screengrab

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REPORTING | QIOSK

Top photo credit: U.S. Marines infiltrate the beach head as part of an amphibious demonstration at Hat Yao Beach, Kingdom of Thailand, during Cobra Gold 2014, Feb. 14 (US Marine Corps photo)

Venezuela regime change means invasion, chaos, and heavy losses

JOSEPH ADDINGTON
OCTOBER 15, 2025
LATIN AMERICA

Maximum pressure has long been President Donald Trump's stance towards the government of Nicolás Maduro in Venezuela — he slapped crippling sanctions on the country during his first term — but in recent days the administration has pushed the stakes even higher.

The Caribbean is currently hosting an astonishing quantity of American naval and air assets, including four *Arleigh Burke*–class destroyers, a guided missile cruiser, an attack submarine, a Marine Amphibious Ready Group, and a flight of F-35 multirole fighters.

Syrian security forces walk together along a street, after clashes between Syrian government troops and local Druze fighters resumed in the southern Druze city of Sweida early on Wednesday, collapsing a ceasefire announced just hours earlier that aimed to put an end to days of deadly sectarian bloodshed, in Sweida, Syria July 16, 2025. REUTERS/Karam al-Masri

Syria’s ticking time bomb

CONNOR ECHOLS
OCTOBER 14, 2025
MIDDLE EAST

In March of this year, Laya’s world came crashing down.

Following a series of skirmishes in the coastal region of Syria, the country’s transitional government had mobilized forces to put down what it saw as a brewing rebellion among Alawites, a minority offshoot of Shia Islam and the religion of former President Bashar al-Assad. The operation quickly turned into a bloodbath.

Top image credit: Shutterstock AI

Israel wants to pay stipend to US pastors to spread the word

NICK CLEVELAND-STOUT

OCTOBER 14, 2025
WASHINGTON POLITICS

A newly-created firm called Show Faith by Works is embarking on a “geofencing” campaign to target Christian churches and colleges across the American Southwest with pro-Israel advertisements. The pastors and congregations themselves are seemingly unaware of this campaign, and some have concerns with Israel’s methods to target Christians.

According to the firm’s filing under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), Show Faith by Works will “geofence the actual boundaries of every Major (sic) church in California, Arizona, Nevada, and Coloardo (sic) and all Christian Colleges during worship times” and then “track attendees and continue to target [them] with ads” on behalf of Israel. The geofencing campaign is part of a larger $3.2 million contract that also includes trying to hire celebrity spokespeople and paying pastors to produce content.

Top image credit: Pavel Chagochkin via shutterstock.com

Beware: The Zombie War on Terror is upon us

BRANKO MARCETIC

OCTOBER 13, 2025
GLOBAL CRISES

There is good news and bad news for critics of the United States' bloated 21st century war machine. The good news: the "war on terror" is dead.

The bad news? It seems to have become a part of the walking dead — a kind of zombie war on terror that is continuing and radically expanding, even as the fears and threats that originally motivated all its excesses are seemingly vanishing from the American psyche.

Top photo credit: Sen. Marsha Blackburn (Wikimedia/Gabe Skidmore); Sen. Lindsey Graham (Michael Vadon/wikimedia)

Patriot Act supporting senators are mad when they are the targets

JACK HUNTER
OCTOBER 12, 2025
WASHINGTON POLITICS

When it was reported this week that former President Joe Biden's FBI may have targeted the cellphones of eight Republican senators in the "Arctic Frost" investigation related to the January 6, 2021 Capitol Hill riot, the Republicans that were supposedly surveilled were not happy about it.

One was Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), who posted on X Wednesday, "We need to know why (ATT) and (Verizon) did not challenge the subpoena for the phone records of eight United States senators when the Biden FBI spied on us during an anti-Trump probe."

Top image credit: Secretary of State Marco Rubio speaks with President Donald Trump during an event in the State Dining Room at the White House Oct. 8, 2025. Photo by Francis Chung/Pool/ABACAPRESS.COM VIA REUTERSCONNECT

Is Rubio finally powerful enough to topple Venezuela's regime?

LEE SCHLENKER
OCTOBER 12, 2025
LATIN AMERICA

It appears that Secretary of State Marco Rubio is emerging victorious in the internal Trump administration battle over the direction of U.S. policy toward Venezuela.

The New York Times reported on Oct. 6 that White House special envoy Richard Grenell — who, after meeting President Nicolas Maduro in Caracas this January inked deportation agreements, won the release of American prisoners, and secured energy licenses for U.S. and European oil majors — was told by President Donald Trump to stop all diplomatic outreach toward the resource-rich South American nation.

Top photo credit: Mali's junta leader Assimi Goita attends the first ordinary summit of heads of state and governments of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) in Niamey, Niger July 6, 2024. REUTERS/Mahamadou Hamidou

Mali in crisis: When the junta has no one left to blame but itself

DAN M. FORD
OCTOBER 10, 2025
AFRICA

Since early September, members of the Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) terrorist organization have been attacking and kidnapping truck drivers transporting fuel to the Malian capital of Bamako. The effects of this blockade appear to be reaching a high point, with images this week showing residents jammed into long lines in the city's supply-squeezed gas stations.

This comes after several days during which the blockade's cuts to fuel forced many gas stations across the city to close. Some of the stations that have since reopened are only able to sell diesel to the city's residents.

Top image credit: US Representative Adam Smith (L) and Shanghai Mayor Gong Zheng attend a meeting at the Shanghai's municipal government in Shanghai on September 25, 2025. JADE GAO/Pool via REUTERS

Lawmakers have an antidote for Washington's China panic

JAKE WERNER
OCTOBER 10, 2025
ASIA-PACIFIC

In the midst of the U.S. government shutdown and controversy over military deployments in American cities, partisanship in Congress sometimes seems out of control. But legislators of both parties can still set aside their animosities when it comes to hyping conflict with China.

On Monday, Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Jim Risch introduced his Deter PRC Aggression Against Taiwan Act. On Tuesday, the House Select Committee on China issued a bipartisan report pressing to tighten the U.S. embargo against China on advanced semiconductors. On Wednesday, the Senate Committee on Aging highlighted "the terrifying reality" that, on generic pharmaceuticals, "our nation is completely beholden to Communist China."

Top image credit: Zack Frank

Put this nuclear missile on the back of a truck — but we still don't need it

GABE MURPHY
OCTOBER 09, 2025
MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Last week, analysts from three think tanks penned a joint op-ed for Breaking Defense to make the case for mobilizing the Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) program, a pivot from one exceedingly costly approach to nuclear modernization to another.

After Sentinel faced a 37 percent cost overrun in early 2024, the Pentagon was forced to inform Congress of the cost spike, assess the root causes, and either cancel the program or certify it to move forward under a restructured approach. The Pentagon chose to certify it, but not before noting that the restructured program would actually come in 81 percent over budget.

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